THE MILITIA OF CANADA

FROM LETTERS TO THE SATURDAY'S SPECIAL MILITARY COLUMN OF THE EMPIRE UPON

MILITARY ORGANIZATION

Respectfully Dedicated by Special Permission

TO

MAJOR-GENERAL IVOR CARADOC HERBERT, C.B.

Commanding the Militia of the Dominion of Canada

BY

THE ODD FILE

PRICE, 25 CENTS.

Toronto:
PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY HUNTER, ROSE & COMPANY.
1892

The EDITH *and* LORNE PIERCE
COLLECTION *of* CANADIANA

Queen's University at Kingston

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DEDICATION

TO

MAJOR-GENERAL IVOR JOHN CARADOC HERBERT, C.B.,

Commanding the Militia of the Dominion of Canada.

The concise way in which you so clearly laid bare the many defects of our Militia System in your first Annual Report, has encouraged us to believe that you will succeed in the arduous task of reforming it, and has led the militia generally to discuss the question of how to improve itself.

Lectures and discussions at the Royal United Service Institution have been the means of many important improvements in the training and organization of the Regular Army, Navy and Auxiliary Forces of Great Britain, indeed, if it had not been for the advocacy in the Theatre of that Institution by that eminent Scotch lawyer, Lord Kingsboro, Lord Justice Clerk of Scotland (better known as the Right Hon. J. H. Macdonald), who is an enthusiastic volunteer and Colonel Commandant Commanding the Queen's Edinboro' (Volunteer) Rifles, it is doubtful if the organization of Volunteers under the Brigade System would have been carried out when it was.

I am fully aware that in so kindly giving permission for this paper to be dedicated to you, you are in no way endorsing the opinions expressed therein, but that your intention is to promote thought and discussion upon these subjects by the members of the Canadian Militia within due bounds, and upon similar lines as are carried on at the R.U.S.I.

Thanking you for the encouragement thus bestowed,

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

THE ODD FILE.

OUR MILITARY ORGANIZATION.

No. I.

I want now to call attention to our organization, or rather want of organization, but first let me say that this year's report of the general officer commanding the militia has stirred us all up and made us believe that a new era is at last coming. It is quite a pleasure to us military reformers, if I may use the term, to read his report. Take for instance his ready grasp of the contention that we have always put forward, that we should have two distinct forces—one the militia, pure and simple, under strict military code, and the other a volunteer force with its capitation grant of so much per head for efficients, going into the regimental fund, and its semi-civil organization, as has grown up in many of the city corps.

Take for instance the Queen's Own. They are allowed 420 N. C. O. and men, or 42 men per company, for whom they draw $6.00 per annum, which, by a civil organization, is taken for a certain fund. Now, as a matter of fact, they have 650 men, or 65 men per company. If, therefore, they only got a capitation grant of $6 per man, and had a legal volunteer organization, they would be on a very much more satisfactory footing, and there would be some encouragement for officers to work their companies up to a proper strength, instead of keeping them at the strength of half a company, as at present.

The militia proper would also be on a better footing, as they would no longer feel that they were being left in the lurch by their city brethren. On the subject of militia training, I will speak later. I will put a few simple propositions before you. Suppose our country was attacked by, we'll say, Eskimo, to-morrow, and we call out our militia, what organization have we? Cavalry, artillery and infantry must be brigaded and formed into divisions. We may suppose that No. 2 district constitutes one division, and the D. A. G. staff take over the command of that division. All right, so far so good. But what is the rest? A rabble?

There are two regiments of cavalry, three batteries of artillery, and 17 regiments of infantry. Now suppose you say, "Form the infantry into four brigades." All right, go ahead. Where are your brigades' staff? Where are even your Brigadiers? Perhaps No. 2 district may be exceptionally fortunate, and you may find four Brigadiers, but suppose one or

two of them die or get killed, where are you then? And even if you have them, where is your staff? Your organization? You may have lots of enthusiastic young officers, but, they are useless without the training. Such duties cannot be picked up in a day, and however good a dry goods or hardware man, etc., a fellow may be, he is a long way off from being a trained staff officer or a brigadier.

No. II.

"A chain of responsibility, maintained by competent staff officers, must exist, in order that the motive power of one controlling will shall reach all ranks." (Vide report of the major-general commanding the militia, 31st December, 1891, page 11.)

I asked how you were going to form brigades without properly trained staff officers. It has been suggested that my contention might be taken as a reflection on the senior officers of the militia. This is not so, by any means. My contention is not that we have not the men with brains capable of filling the positions, but is "that they are not yet trained to the work."

One gentleman, a Canadian and a graduate of the R.M.C. to boot, holds the opinion that in the event of it being necessary to defend our homes, the Imperial Government would immediately send out army officers to fill the staff positions.

I contend that this is not only impossible, but undesirable, *if we take time by the forelock.*

It is impossible, because in the event of such a deplorable occurrence the army itself would be fully employed, and could not spare a dozen officers. It is undesirable, because we have plenty of shrewd, capable men, who with the proper training would suit our wants a great deal better, as they understand their country and its ways, and have a natural training which enables them to overcome difficulties which appear almost insurmountable to men who lack the bush and rough schooling which most Canadians have gone through.

To establish my whole case, I will take a distant point for our mobilization, as it will make the difficulties more clear to you, although they equally exist if Toronto was the point of assembly.

We will suppose the enemy advancing from Hudson's Bay, and the troops of No. 2 district ordered to mobilize at North Bay under the D.A.G. of the district. For the present I will pass over the difficulties of the transport and supply for their mobilization, but will merely take it for granted that every company is raised to its proper fighting

strength of 100 N.C.O. and men, and thus instead of 17 of the present "skeleton battalions" you will have 15 battalions of 800 men each, and two battalions of 1,000 men each. (I am only dealing with the infantry at present.) This will give 14,000 men, with a staff of one D.A.G. and one brigade major, one district paymaster.

In England the volunteers are formed into brigades by counties or adjoining counties, and thus, besides the general commanding the districts with his full staff, and the officer commanding the regimental districts, they have their volunteer infantry brigades' staff. The headquarters office is fully set out in the army orders, also "the place of assembly" is laid down, and a staff of five to each brigade appointed, viz., brigadier, his A.D.C., brigade-major, supply and transport officer, and brigade surgeon. Thus, when any volunteer brigade takes the field, or goes out to camp, it does so with its own staff, and all the ordinary business of the battalions forming each brigade is done through its own brigade office, so that the brigade staff becomes familiar with their work, and the regimental officers are in touch with and familiar with working under them, and, to use the words of General Herbert quoted above, "one controlling will shall reach all ranks."

I am aware that such a small district staff as ours would be insufficient to command the brigades formed by the 14,000 men composing the fighting strength of the 17 battalions whose organization I propose to discuss later, and I cannot do better than give you a list of the district staff in England, so that you may be fully aware of the actual requirements, irrespective of the brigade organization which we are now discussing. It is as follows:

1, General commanding; 2, his A.D.C.; 3, assistant adjutant-general; 4, deputy assistant adjutant-general; 5, deputy assistant adjutant-general for instruction; 6, district inspector of musketry; 7, officer commanding artillery (colonel on staff); 8, officer commanding engineers (colonel on staff); 9, senior ordnance store officer; 10, district paymaster; 11, principal medical officer.

I will now ask you to turn to page 10 in the militia list, as it is to that page I must now devote myself.

No. III.

"This can only be accomplished by organization and a sound administrative system."—Vide report of the Major-General Commanding Canadian Militia, page 11, 31st December, 1891.

Upon page 10 of the Militia List you will find the commencement of

a brigade organization. Each military district is there divided into brigade divisions. Why "divisions" I do not know, but for our purposes I will treat them as brigades.

I do not propose to enter into the question as to whether these brigades are formed in the most convenient groups of counties for mobilization, but take them as they are.

In No. 2 district the Third Brigade is composed of the battalions in the counties of Brant, Haldimand, Hamilton (city) Monck, Niagara, Norfolk, Welland, Wentworth and Lincoln, in which at present there are seven battalions, viz., the 13th, 19th, 37th, 38th, 39th, 44th, 77th. The Fourth Brigade has Cardwell, Grey, Ontario, Peel, Simcoe, Halton and York (Algoma with the 96th has been transferred to No. 10 district, I believe), which makes a brigade composed of the 12th, 20th, 31st, 34th, 35th and 36th battalions. The Fifth Brigade is composed of the city of Toronto battalions, viz., the 2nd, 10th and 48th.

But I venture to assert that not one of these battalions knows to which brigade it belongs. Indeed, I venture to say that not half a dozen officers in the militia know anything at all about this paper organization.

The most important points of the English system are here left out. To make the system workable, and to facilitate mobilization, a "place of assembly" should be named for each brigade, and a brigade staff appointed now, and each brigade should be called out to its training "as a brigade," and should be accustomed "to assemble at the place named" and with its brigade staff, through whom all orders from the officer commanding the district should go, and through whom all appointments should be made.

It has been said that in time of necessity these brigades' staff could readily be appointed from the most capable officers in the district; but think for a minute what would be the effect of such a course. In the first place the officers so appointed would be, for the most part, unacquainted with their duty. Then again, there is hardly a battalion which has its full complement of officers, and you would still further weaken them in one of their greatest wants; further, by taking the most capable from their battalions at a time of necessity, you would place those battalions so deprived of their head in a most unenviable and unfair position.

If, on the other hand, these appointments were made "now," and allowed to really command their brigades, they would not only get much of the requisite training, but other men, taking their places in

their battalions, would get trained in their positions and accustomed to work in their brigades.

It therefore appears to me that the first essential work (to use the general's words) "in accomplishing our organization" is to make our paper brigades "real and effective":

First—by re-arranging them where necessary.

Second—By appointing a "place of assembly" for each, and letting them always assemble there and thus get used, in time of peace, to a most trying duty.

Third—By appointing at once a brigade staff for each brigade.

I do not pretend to be advocating the general's scheme of organization, as I know nothing of it; neither can I attempt to put our ideas in a complete form, as it would make these letters occupy too much space, but I am trying to show you, in a rough sketch, how, without expense, our organization (and, therefore, our usefulness) could be rendered workable. And now we come to the important question of transport and supply.

No. IV.

I have been asked to justify the statement that it is undesirable "to fill the staff positions, in the event of trouble, with Imperial officers."

Permit me to point out that I qualified that by saying "if we take time by the forelock," in other words, "if we trained our own staff beforehand."

Moreover, I was speaking of brigades' staff, and not the superior positions where trained strategians and tacticians are required, upon the principle of every man to his trade; just as a tailor is necessary instead of an amateur to make a coat, so is a trained soldier tactician necessary in his place.

As I said, we have plenty of clever, shrewd men, who, with training, would make first-rate officers on the brigades' staff, and we might utilize some of the younger men on the retired list, of known and tried ability, such as the Toronto chief of police. I pointed out in that letter that almost every Canadian (by birth or adoption) has had a certain amount of valuable rough bush training which enables him to overcome difficulties in a rough and ready way, and for some of our work would give him an advantage over his confrere of the army.

When I wrote this I had in my mind two instances that occurred under my own eye. In the first it was necessary for a swift, broad river to be crossed by troops and transport, and there were no materisal

or pontoon to be had for a bridge. A clever and energetic, English staff officer tried to rig a cable ferry, but for several days was unable to get it to work. At last he permitted a man with extensive bush and prairie experience to take it in hand with the result that within an hour it was working successfully.

In the other case a column hastening in pursuit of the enemy was delayed whilst an R. E. staff officer built a bridge over a swamp. He was a capital staff officer, capable, and knew his staff work, but this valuable time was wasted, as the transport and guns, led by an old bush hand, went round by an easier spot which they fixed in a few minutes with a few boughs in the ordinary bushwhacking style. Thus you see in two cases practical every day rough bush experience had the advantage over the theoretical training of the highest order. We must not, however, fall into the gross error of despising the latter.

Unfortunately most of our militia officers are so narrow-minded that they are content to go on from year to year with the single ambition of trying to "best" some rival corps in cup competitions or such like. We want to stir up such men "to think."

Does the force exist simply to gratify their petty ambition in such a direction, as they appear to think? Or does it really exist for the country's defence, as we believe? If we are right, what is the good of a force that exists only as a "mob," without organization? If these men ever read, I would ask them to read "Modern War," by Col. Derrecagaix (Chapman & Co). Those in Toronto can get it in the Public Library ("D1192-3)." If they will read this book carefully they will find the advantage of organization fully set out and the disastrous effects of the want of it. More than that, they will find it fully proved that, other things being equal, a country with a superior organization will beat a country with an inferior one. A common error about the Franco-German war is that the Germans won because they were better soldiers. Let anyone so thinking read Col. Lonsdale Hale's article upon the battle of Woerth in the June number of The Contemporary Review. Indeed most military students agree that "the French soldier was the superior of the two," but that France was "beaten from the word 'go' by the superior German organization." When once we can get our countrymen to read for themselves, and recognize the fact that no matter how brave our individual men may be, we are absolutely nothing without "organization," then they may put aside their little petty conceits and jealousies and set to work in earnest to put our house in order so as to be prepared to meet any attack upon our home with all the available means in our power, instead of an armed mob.

It is for this reason that having looked at our executive organization, it is now necessary to consider our means for mobilization and transport. What is necessary for one district is necessary for another, and I have only taken No. 2 district as an illustration of the whole, and North Bay as a mobilization point moderately accessible and yet far enough off, to enable an example of the necessary proceedings to be made.

Owing to the transfer of the 96th from No. 2 district to No. 10, we have now to consider how to move only 13,200 infantry to North Bay.

In a complete scheme of organization the question of railway transport would, of course, have to be fully considered, and the routes laid down for the different brigades to various defensive points, so that the staff may study it in conjunction with the railway officials, and in case of emergency that each may do their duty accurately and mechanically. A delay in assembling a brigade would mean a delay in entraining, which would delay, in its turn, the whole mobilization ; for the disastrous results of which read Derrecagaix. Each officer and railway officer should know his particular place and duty, and then things would work like clock-work.

I have calculated four wagons and teams with four tons of regimental baggage, tents and 100 rounds of ammunition per man with each company of 100 men. This is a very minium allowance and would not admit of the supply and transport train being far off.

In order to promote the harmonious working of military with the officials in England a certain number of officers are yearly permitted to be attached to the establishment of one of the largest railways in the kingdom, and in time of mobilization their training would be of immense value to the military force. This example might be worked in with the R.M.C. and long course officers, with great advantage to our force.

A high official in the G. T. R. has most kindly worked out the fol lowing scheme by which the whole of the force we are now discussing could be assembled at North Bay in four days. I cannot do better than quote his letter in full. He says :

"I have found time to work out the calculations you wanted in reference to your proposition as to moving men from the different points on the Grand Trunk to North Bay.

"In making my calculations I have considered that the force is going to disembark from the cars at North Bay, and that all the rolling stock, etc., will be at once available to return and bring up fresh troops.

"I have calculated that I can take 400 men, 16 tons of baggage and three horses in each train. In this division of numbers I find it will re 33 trains and I have estimated, that although at first a few

trains could be handled at North Bay pretty quickly, yet, as the trains on the sidings up there began to accumulate, and as the single track railway leading to North Bay began to be tried to its utmost capacity in getting up trains and bringing the empties back, it would not be safe to calculate that the trains could arrive there much, if any, faster than an average of one an hour. In this way, if we had a sufficient number of trains available to do the work, the force could be got there from the points you mention in say, 36 hours from the time the first corps arrived. However, I have estimated that 11 trains would be as many as could be got together at short notice without materially interrupting the general traffic of the railway, and with these trains it would take 72 hours from the time of the arrival of that first train to the arrival of the last, the time from starting the first train being 84 hours until they were all on the ground.

"I have, in arranging the starting of the trains from the different points, taken into consideration the facilities there would be in the event of an immediate order for the transport to be given, and I have prepared a table, which I enclose, showing the proposed time and departure of each half battalion of 400 men, from the different points.

Battalion.	Number of Men.	Date.	Place of Departure.	Hour of Starting.	Hour of Arrival at North Bay.	Date.	No. of Train.	Remarks.
2nd	400	1st..	Toronto	6 a.m..	6 p.m.	1st..	1	Via Allandale.
2nd	400	1st..	Toronto	7 a.m..	7 p.m.	1st..	2	Via Allandale.
34th	400	1st..	Bowmanville	6 a.m..	8 p.m.	1st..	3	Via Whitby & Atherley.
34th	400	1st..	Bowmanville	7 a.m..	9 p.m.	1st..	4	Via Whitby & Atherley.
13th	400	1st..	Hamilton.	8 a.m..	10 p.m.	1st..	5	Via Georgetown.
38th	400	1st..	Brantford	6 a.m..	11 p.m.	1st..	6	Via Georgetown.
39th	400	1st..	Simcoe	6 a.m..	12 mid.	1st..	7	Via Georgetown.
39th	400	1st..	Simcoe	7 a.m..	1 a.m.	2nd.	8	Via Georgetown.
38th	400	1st..	Brantfo d	8 a.m..	2 a.m.	2nd.	9	Via Georgetown.
2nd	200	1st..	Toronto	3 p.m..	3 a.m.	2nd.	10	Via Allandale.
10th	200							
13th ..	400	1st .	Hamilton.	3 p.m..	4 a.m.	2nd.	11	Via Georgetown.
31st	400	1st..	Owen Sound	12 noon.	11 a.m.	2nd.	1	Via str to Parry Sound,
31st	400	1st..	Owen Sound	12 noon.	12 noon	2nd.	2	thence train, bra'chline
35th	400	2nd	Barrie	5 a.m..	2 p.m.	2nd.	3	
35th	400	2nd.	Barrie	6 a.m..	3 p.m.	2nd.	4	
10th	400	2nd,	Toronto	12 noon.	12 mid.	2nd.	5	Via Allandale.
20th	400	2nd.	Milton	1 p.m..	1 a.m.	3rd..	6	Via Georgetown.
10th	400	2nd.	Toronto	2 p m..	2 a.m.	3rd..	7	Via Allandale.
48th	400	2nd.	Toronto	3 p.m..	3 a.m.	3rd..	8	Via Allandale.
20th	400	2nd.	Milton	4 p.m..	4 a.m.	3rd..	9	Via Georgetown.
48th	400	2nd.	Toronto	5 p.m..	5 a.m.	3rd..	10	Via Allandale.
12th	400	2nd.	Toronto	6 p.m..	6 a.m.	3rd..	11	Via Allandale.
12th	400	3rd.	Toronto	1 a.m..	1 p.m.	3rd..	1	Via Allandale.
19th	400	2nd.	St. Catharines.....	8 p.m..	2 p.m.	3rd..	2	Via steamer to Toronto.
19th	400	2nd.	St. Catharines.....	8 p.m..	4 p.m.	3rd..	3	Via steamer to Toronto.
36th	400	3rd.	Brampton	4 a.m..	5 p.m.	3rd..	4	Via Toronto.
44th	400	3rd.	St. Catharines.....	10 a.m..	1 a.m.	4th..	5	Via steamer to Toronto.
44th	400	3rd.	St. Catharines.....	10 a.m .	3 a.m.	4th..	6	Via steamer to Toronto.
36th	400	3rd.	Brampton	4 p.m..	5 a.m.	4th..	7	Via Toronto
77th	400	3rd	Hamilton.....	4 p.m..	6 a.m.	4th .	8	Via Georgetown.
77th	400	3rd.	Hamilton.....	7 p.m .	9 a.m.	4th..	9	Via Georgetown.
37th	400	4th.	Brantford	1 a.m..	4 p.m.	4th..	10	Via Georgetown.
37th	400	4th.	Brantford	2 a.m..	5 p.m.	.....	11	Via Georgetown.
	13,200							

"I have no doubt if I had more leisure to think it out I could make a better arrangement, and it is, I think, a good idea of yours to work up something of this kind.

"A railway staff corps, composed of managers of railways, such as there is in England, would, I think, be of service in Canada also.

"If you have any question to ask or explanation required I shall be glad to do what I can."

I have very few remarks to add to this most valuable contribution from the fountain-head. It is complete and shows a master-hand.

It will be noticed that every available route is used and the waterways where possible. For instance, the 31st go by steamer to Parry Sound, and thence by the new branch line. The 19th and 44th by steamer to Toronto, etc.

The suggestion for a railway staff corps is one that I hope the authorities will immediately adopt.

There are just two points on which I must ask your serious consideration, as they include my whole argument. This scheme is complete "only for one district." What about the other 11? If it would tax our resources to this extent, and take four days to mobilize the infantry alone of No. 2 district, after due time and consideration, think what it would be to mobilize the whole force and "without organization?"

No. V.

In 1885 we had no transport or supply service, and over 3,000 waggons, teams and teamsters had to be picked up, and in any condition and at any price they liked to ask. A transport service should be at once organized under a Quartermaster-General at headquarters in Ottawa, and corps organized by the appointment of suitable officers at each district headquarters. They should be organized as "District Corps," just the same as any other volunteer militia regiment. Their business should be to confer with the railway and steamboat corps, if there is one, and find out exactly the capacity of each road, also the number of horses and vehicles available in their respective districts, and to formulate a scheme, on paper, ready to be carried out instantly in case of need, for, as you are aware, under the Militia Act we possess the power of impressment. We require the heads, both at Ottawa and in the districts, upon whom this duty would fall, and we require them now, so that they may gather the knowledge and study the subject, and know exactly what to do on receiving a memo. that such and such a force is to move at such a time to such a place.

I should like to see a system of registration of farmers' teams suitable or the purposes.

The best way to do it would be to apportion to each district so many waggons, teams and teamsters under the district officers, and let them appoint a N.C.O. to each division of 10 waggons. These should be distributed over the country, and the farmers should be encouraged "to compete" for registration by prizes to the best and most competent.

Every team entered upon the register should be paid a retaining fee, of say $6, and the driver sworn in for three years.

When the D.A.G. or B.M. is going to a place to inspect an armory the competitive teams for registration should be notified and parade before him.

We will suppose the D.A.G. or B.M. is to inspect the armory of the Bond Head company of the 36th Battalion, and that there is a Cookstown division of 10 waggons, a Bond Head division of 10 waggons and a Bradford division of 10 waggons. Their annual parade for inspection and registration should be advertised for the most convenient place of assembly for the three divisions, and a prize of $10 offered for the best outfit and $10 for the best Division. The District Transport officers should accompany the D.A.G. and assist at the inspection and registration, and after the enrolment he should select the N.C.O. and use the rest of the day for instruction in the simple formations of line and column of route by word of command. This would, I think, prove immensely popular with the farmers and give us a splendid equipment in case of need, at a very minimum annual cost.

Each city volunteer regiment should be encouraged to organize a regimental transport upon the English volunteer system, and when they march out once or twice a year (but certainly upon inspection), their waggons should accompany them with rations, camp utensils, tents and ammunition.

There is no doubt that our farmers' waggons are most suitable for this service, and they themselves are, as a class, active, inventive men, whose wits are fully alive to such work by constant practice. They are used to overcoming difficulties such as meet a Transport corps, and by adopting such a system as this we might secure as efficient a Transport corps as there is in the world, at a paltry cost of say $17,000 to $50,000 per annum.

No. VI.

In answer to the two objections, viz., that I have not stated the number of transport waggons required, and that we could not get the

money, permit me to reply that, roughly speaking, Lord Wolseley, in his "Pocket Book," calculates the transport service necessary for an infantry division of 10,000 at 250 carts and waggons, besides a regimental transport of 17 carts and waggons to each battalion of 1,000 men.

Upon such a basis we would require 432 regimental and divisional transport waggons in No. 2 district. This, at $6 per annum each, gives a total cost of $2,582 per annum, and allowing $830 for prizes, as suggested, a total cost of $3,412. As No. 2 district furnishes about one-fifth of the effective strength of the whole force, an equal proportion of transport service to each would give a total cost of $17,060.

But Lord Wolseley only allows 28 rounds of ammunition per man, whereas we could not do with less than 100. He also makes no provision for carrying the men's valises, as we have to do. He also allows only 1¼ blankets per man, about one-third of what is necessary for us, and if you also follow our custom in the North-west in 1885, and calculate for three days' rations, you will bring our transport necessary for each battalion of 800 men up to 32 waggons, making a total of 560 for No. 2 district and the divisional transport to 750 waggons. This would bring the cost for No. 2 district to $7,800, and a total cost for the whole 12 districts, at the same proportion, of $39,000, and allowing $11,000 for prizes, the very outside cost would be $50,000.

These are the details of the paltry cost I correctly spoke of as being between $17,000 for the smaller establishment, to $50,000 for the larger.

As for not getting the money. This is an agricultural country, and let a rural member get up and propose a vote for this purpose, explaining that the money will go direct into the farmers' pockets, and how many men do you think will dare to oppose it?

I would say, if you like, by all means try the smaller establishment first, at the trifling cost of $17,000 per annum.

For their uniforms I would recommend a suit of Karki and broad felt hat, with some cocks' feathers in it.

I propose to speak now of the rural militia, which would form the bulk of the fighting force in the event of trouble.

I imagine that every true well-wisher of the militia is agreed upon the necessity of training all the corps every year instead of biennially, and that the only drawback is the expense.

I propose to show that you can do this upon the present expenditure, or, at all events, upon a very slight increase. The war strength of a

company, "*must be*" 100, of course. With the present constituted strength of 42 N.C.O. and men, including buglers, etc., what is a company but "*a skeleton*" when formed up in its full strength, and when you deduct guards, picquets, cooks and fatigue men from a company in camp, did you or any one else ever see a company which was not "*a skeleton of a skeleton*"?

Let us accept this fact, and it clears the ground at once, and we will speedily decide to drill "*all*" the corps every year, all the corps, not necessarily the full establishment of each corps. The cavalry and the artillery should be maintained as strong as possible, stronger, in fact, than they now are; but as regards the rural infantry all our means should, I submit, be devoted to "*training the officers and N. C. officers*"; and for that purpose it is not necessary to bring out more rank and file than are required for the skeleton on which officers may exercise, say 8 or 10 N.C.O. and men per company. We could recruit it up to its full strength in two days in case of trouble, if we had this backbone thoroughly efficient.

I am very well aware of all the objections that are and may be urged against this. Some commanding officers, and officers commanding companies, say that they wish to take out "*full bodies, not skeletons,*' and that with this reduction they would not have "*any men to command.*" In reply, I say that they "*have not men now,*" and there is not, indeed, a "rural regiment in Canada to-day, except as a skeleton"; and that if an order were given to them to turn out to-morrow, enlistments would have to begin *de novo.*

Little more than a tithe of the men who were drilled in our last camps are available to-day in the corps in which they were then enrolled. The main weakness of our rural regiments lies in the insufficiency and inefficiency of the officers and N.C.O. That defect is the one which ought first to engage attention, and till that is removed it is useless to hope for anything reliable or creditable.

But no matter what the opinions or wishes of individual officers, whose vanity may cloud their judgments, the plan proposed is, I submit, the one best calculated to secure a state of efficiency commensurate without means.

If Canada had well trained officers and N.C.O. for 100 regiments it would be strong compared with its neighbor, for it would then have the means of organizing and mobilizing the raw material. If, on the other hand, it had 500,000 men merely enrolled, but without "*trained officers,*" it would be comparatively weak, for it would have but an inert and useless mass, in fact, as it is now, "an armed mob."

The proposition to bring out fewer men per company is not, however, so unpopular as at first sight it might seem. Officers recognize the importance of more frequent trainings than they now receive, and though they would like to take out their corps full bodied on all occasions, yet most prefer to come out annually with the few, than biennially with the many, especially when they consider that the former is better for themselves as individuals.

Though an odd one here and there may object to my proposition, it will be found that those men who are worth considering, who, in fact, take interest in their work, and are anxious for real improvement rather than parade and show, will recognize the advantage afforded by it.

The discouragement which officers experience under the biennial system is very great; the encouragement which they would derive from a return to the annual system would give increased vitality to that portion of the body which only has vitality, and which only the country need at present consider.

As for cost, the great saving which this plan would effect in pay, rations, clothing, transport, etc., would I contend, enable the country to train annually the complete backbone of the militia, viz., the officers and N.C.O. of two battalions, where it only half trains one now.

No. VII.

On the two chief points in the rural militia training we ought all to combine and fight the hardest, viz., 1st, "For annual training." When we have obtained that we should strike for the 2nd, viz., "At least three full weeks in camp."

So long as we go on as at present it is sheer waste of money Neither the country nor militia are getting any good out of it.

More attention should also be paid to the training of the officers and non-commissioned officers. No man should be granted an R.S.I. certificate uutil he is "really" qualified to do his work. At present too often young men will "cram" for two or three weeks and fudge through. Consequently they quickly forget what they have learnt.

I saw some volunteers inspected last fall and the subalterns tested in giving detail of drill. Of four whom I saw thus examined I believe not one could answer without mistake, and consequently the official report upon them says they "evidently get little practice at drill." As a matter of fact, I know these young officers had only obtained their R.S.I. certificate shortly before having just finished their short course, the fault lay, therefore, not with their command-

ing officers or commandants of schools, but with the system which permitted them to pass after a week or so "cramming."

I most strongly endorse the report of the D.A.G. of No. 1 district in 1888, of which the following is an extract:

"That there are defects in the system, and great lack of efficiency amongst officers and men, must be clear to even an ordinary observer. The chief cause of this inefficiency is the shortness of the time allowed for training. That seven or eight days drill every two years is utterly insufficient goes without saying. It scarcely suffices to preserve the organization, much less to make it in any way reliable. As a remedy, I would take the liberty of urging that each rural corps be drilled every year. If, through lack of means, it cannot be taken out 'full-bodied,' let it, by all means, come as a skeleton. Much better that the skeleton, the 'framework,' should turn out, than that the whole body should be left at home to die of inanition. Officers and N. C. officers are the framework of even the most complete regiment; in a Canadian militia regiment they are something more. They are its very life; of necessity they are its trainers as well as its leaders. If they are not fairly good, the corps is worth little, and if they are bad, to retain them is a positive evil. Their efficiency, then, is the first thing to be secured, and it is infinitely more important that they should be brought together every year with comparatively few men, than that the biennial aystem should be continued with double, treble or even quadruple the number of rank and file. It must not be understood, however, that I advise a reduction of the force. On the contrary, I feel that the organization should be extended, and that an infantry corps should be maintained in each county, but maintained in such a way as to have a greater feeling of reality infused into it. For many years to come our militia must be our main defence, and it should be placed on the best possible footing as to both efficiency and numbers of corps rather than numbers of men."

Do not think for a minute that I advocate drilling a thinner skeleton than we do now. No, by no means; but if we are only to spend the same amount in drill pay as at present, then I say drill the important part of it, the backbone, upon which you can quickly build your body; "the frame," which, if perfect, can quickly be clothed with the covering, is the part which we ought to do our utmost to bring to perfection.

It is all a question of money. The total drill pay of an eight-company battalion, including its full staff, allowance for horses, etc., is $3,111.36. One-half of that amount is $1,555.68. Now the cost of

drilling the whole of the officers and 10 N.C.O. and men per company, together with the full staff and the same allowance, is $1,555.60; therefore, you can drill the full staff, all the officers and 10 N.C.O. and men of two battalions for exactly the same money that "one" now costs, and that half of the $3,111.36 now spent upon 32 men per company is clean thrown away with the present biennial system.

I only propose this change in case of it being absolutely impossible to get sufficient money to drill annually the whole force as at present constituted. But there ought to be no difficutty in getting sufficient. Last year there were left undrilled 40 battalions, containing 265 companies, the total drill pay and allowance for which amounts to $106,-117.60.

Some city officers are in favor of doing away with a certain number of these battalions. Such men cannot have thought the matter out. Either we want to be prepared with the nucleus of a sufficiently large force to defend our country, or we do not want any at all. I am a believer in the former state of things, and instead of reducing the number of battalions, I say we ought to increase them, but I contend that, as I have already said, we *must* drill them every year, and *must* have a thorough efficient nucleus, instead of annually wasting a certain sum on inefficient battalions. If it is an absolute fact that the country cannot afford the additional $106,000 annual expenditure upon the militia (personally I do not believe that the country is so poverty stricken as that), but if our legislators decide that it is so, then far better adopt this plan of drilling the whole officers and N.C.O. every year, and have them thoroughly efficient, than to go on as at present wasting money. I only offer it as an alternative, but I am convinced it is a far better plan than the present.

As for increasing the permanent corps. These only exist as schools for the purpose of training the officers, N.C.O. and men of the active militia, and the needs of the latter are the most important. Some of these permanent corps schools give the country full value for their money; others, from current reports, do not appear to do so, and as they are a great expense to the country they all ought to do so or they are not worth retaining at the cost of the militia.

I find the amount expended upon these schools, numbering about 1,000 men (exclusive of artillery), is $281,119. Whereas the amount spent upon the 40,000 active militia "for drill" is only $272,098. The schools are a very valuable adjunct to the militia, and as their cost is so proportionately heavy they ought to do all their work completely.

I am anxious not to be misunderstood in this matter. I do not believe we can do *without* these schools. I believe them to be essential to the militia, but I hold that the appointments thereto should not be made through political influence, but should be entirely in the hands of the General Commanding, in order that he might exercise the full power of selection from particularly qualified officers of the militia and R.M.C. Cadets. If the General Commanding had his hands free in this matter I feel sure the appointment to these lectureships (as one may really call them), would not be of the kind they frequently are now, and the work would be thoroughly done, and the country would get the worth of its money, and the militia would not have to complain as it does now that some of these schools are a burden instead of a help.

At all events, before any further sum is expended upon them, the great and pressing wants of the active militia ought to be attended to. Out of a total expenditure upon its behalf of $1,279,563, the active militia draws, directly, a very small proportion and appears often a secondary consideration, although the rest of the organization would not exist except to administer to its requirements.

We cannot possibly all agree upon these important subjects of which I have been writing, but when men will read and think and talk and write, there are hopes for them.

I am fully aware that I am not a "Sir John A.," and cannot carry the country immediately upon my "national policy," but a mouse may help a lion, and I can keep on quietly digging and digging, and am bound to make some impression in time. If I succeed in *making half a dozen men* "THINK" upon the subject I shall have accomplished something.

It seems to me that the militia has two strong enemies within itself. One is mostly to be found in rural corps. It joins apparently in order to astonish its country friends now and then with its gorgeous apparel, or in order to go upon a cheap ten days' picnic biennially.

The other is mostly in city corps. It is a supercilious thing wrapped up in its own importance. It goes about thinking "You can't find much fault with us. We are the stuff. We are." It forgets that even if its own unit is as perfect as it thinks—which, by the bye, it never is—it is still one very, very small unit in the line of national defence. It omits to "think" outside its own little circumference, and it has joined the militia apparently for its "self-glorification."

No. VIII.

A great friend whose thoughts jump with mine was recently discussing with me the training of our rural militia, and I think it will be no breach of confidence to give you his exact words. They were as follows :

"Not the least difficult question in connection with military training is that of rifle shooting, or the making the men skilful in the use of what may now be considered their only weapon. It must be apparent to anyone that cares to give a moment's thought to the subject, that it is almost useless to train men to move into position if they are not able when there to use with fair effect the arm placed in their hands. Indeed the power of manœuvring is secondary to the power to do execution with the weapon. The main things, in fact, if not the only things, now required to be taught to troops, especially 'militia' troops, are *discipline and fire discipline.* If we add to these the power to march, then the moving of the men on the chess board will take care of itself. Even the best armies are not trained to the possibility of their weapons, and the main reason of this is that they are limited to their ammunition supply. Rifle shooting is expensive, as those well know who indulge much in it. The United States regular army is, perhaps, in that respect, better off than any other, for the supply to them is practically unlimited and the results are correspondingly good. In our own British regular army a change for the better has taken place within late years, still there is much room for improvement. Looking at home here in Canada we cannot find much to boast of. Amongst city corps a certain amount of practice is done, but it is too much limited to the few. The great mass of the enrolled do not fire, they are not required to do so, and they could not be trusted to handle their rifles in anger until they had some preliminary practice. Something is done in this direction by rural corps during the annual drill, but with rather unsatisfactory results. It can scarcely be expected that any good can come from the firing of 20 rounds in a hurried manner and without any preliminary instruction, once in two years. Indeed, the only satisfaction that is derived from it is the knowledge that a certain number of men have loaded and fired their rifles at a fixed object. It is folly to suppose that any lasting benefit can result from such a course. In the interest of the country then, it is desirable that some other and more continuing system should be adopted for securing efficiency with the weapon. Just what that system should be is a moot point. It has been urged that more time should be devoted to the practice during

the camp, some going so far as to say that the time could be more profitably spent in rifle shooting than in any other way. The drillmaster, however, contends that there is already too much of the time taken for shooting, or rather that there is not enough taken for the marching and setting up of the men. Doubtless, here, as in many other things, the happy mean might be struck with profit, especially if the men were marched to and from the ranges with regularity, and were kept under strict control while there, and did a large amount of section volley firing with a view to securing fire discipline. Another plan suggested to me by an officer of my acquaintance, is to have a rifle camp on each district, at a time other than that set for the annual drill. This, he said, every militiaman in the district should be invited to attend, on the understanding that he would not there be required to compete with crack shots, but be required only to obtain a certain number of points which would entitle him to a marksman's badge and a certain sum of money. He thought that this would encourage practice (the main object) by men who have confidence in their ability to reach a certain standard, but who would shrink from a competition with Bisley winners and others who have greater opportunities. Another plan I have heard has been advocated by a staff officer, and it is this: Let the men of a company be got together at the company headquarters on the occasion of the brigade-major's inspection and have them shoot in his presence, and have him certify as to the result. Upon his report, or that of the deputy adjutant-general of the district, have the district paymaster instructed to pay the sums earned. This, no doubt, would be a good plan if there were a suitable range at each company headquarters; but at very few does a proper and safe one exist. Another proposition is to give a larger rate of pay per day to those who make good shooting in camp. Which of these different plans would be the best it is difficult to determine, but that something is needed there can be no question, and it would be well, I think, if those who are conversant with the subject, and take an interest in it, would give their ideas as to what system would be the most convenient for the men who compose the force, and at the same time be the best calculated to secure satisfactory results."

So says my friend, and I agree with him, but, as I believe in advocating a positive plan, I may say that I am in favor of compelling the men to do half an hour's aiming and position drill every morning in camp, and of firing at least 100 rounds of ammunition during their training, and of that amount, 80 rounds should be by word of command to teach them fire discipline.

I confess the old bugbear "expense" stares you in the face again here, but once more may I ask; is our force to be a reality or a sham?

If it is a reality, is it not the one point at which we are aiming, to teach men to shoot what they are aiming at? If, therefore, we leave out the training for the one great essential, what is the use of all the rest?

Prince Kraft Hohenlohe, in his work upon artillery, lays down *three great principles*. The first is to HIT, the second to HIT, and the third to HIT.

Are not those the three great principles we should also aim at? If so, what is the use of all the other expenditure if we neglect this?

These remarks apply equally to city corps. When they get what I hope to see them with, viz., a true volunteer organization with a capitation grant, they will have to earn that grant by putting in a percentage of drills and firing so many rounds of ammunition. This number will be at least 100, I hope, and the same rule for firing by word of command applied.

The city corps are our first line of defence, and we should spare no pains or expense to bring them into a thoroughly efficient state. Of course, in this matter of rifle shooting qualification, our old ghost *expense* appears. To begin with, ammunition costs something. Then, again, if you *oblige* men to do so much firing, you are *obliged* to transport them to the range. If the range is 10 or 20 miles out from their headquarters you cannot oblige them to pay their own fare out there, you must carry them *free*. This is a point which I happen to know was urged upon the authorities when the Toronto Rifle Ranges were given up to the city, and the city should have been compelled to give *free* transport to the new ranges. It is too late now, however, and the country must face the music in Toronto, Montreal and elsewhere, wherever the ranges are beyond walking distance.

The obligatory firing of every man in the ranks is one great good, I hope to see come out of a legal volunteer organization for our city corps.

I have heard only one objection to such a change in their constitution, and that is to the name Volunteer instead of Militia. I heard a Canadian born and bred say that in England they think more of the militia than of the volunteers, and for that reason he objected to the change of name. That will be news to most old countrymen in these times. But, seriously, should such an objection prevent so necessary a reform from being carried out?

Besides, why alter the name? You can still call them Volunteer Militia, and give them the legal organization they now adopt voluntarily.

I am not going to add much more, but in conclusion, I would go back to where I began and say, commence on militia reforms by legalizing our city volunteers' semi-civil funding pay organization. Give them the old country organization, with a capitation grant instead of pay, and make them *earn it*, never forgetting that they are our first line of defence, and at once organize them into brigades. Remember the words of the great Field Marshal, Von Moltke, which he wrote in 1890: "A general staff cannot be improvised on the outbreak of war. It must be prepared long before, during peace, and must be practical, working in constant touch with the troops."

I respectfully submit that the scheme I have roughly outlined is feasible, and a great improvement upon the present system.